

STYLE and INTERPRETATION

by

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in the CONCERT HALL

ROYAL CONSERVATORY of MUSIC
135 COLLEGE STREET

P R O G R A M M E



Saturday, January 11th, 1958
at 8:15 p.m.

God Save The Queen

1. Sonata C Minor Leclair
 (Le Tombeau)

Grave - Allegro non Troppo
Gavotte - Allegretto Grazioso
Allegro

2. Sonata D Major Nardini

Adagio - Allegro con fuoco
Larghetto
Allegretto Grazioso

3. Sonata A Major (K526) Mozart

Molto Allegro
Andante
Presto

Pianist - Mario Bernardi

(Next Concert in this Series - Jan. 25th, 1958)

JEAN MARIE LECLAIR, "l'aîné", (1697-1764)

Sonata in C minor ("Le Tombeau")

Leclair studied violin with Somis, thus he was, as was Pugnani, a grand-pupil of both Corelli and Tartini. In composition he studied with Chéron.

Both violin playing and composing appear to be afterthoughts, for Leclair made a reputation as a ballet-master and, as some accounts have it, a dancer.

The latter part of his life was given over entirely to the composing and publishing of his works, the engraving of which was done by his wife.

In 1764 he was murdered in the street - a perfect crime. No one was brought to trial but his wife was not above suspicion. Perhaps fiddlers ought not to marry engravers, for as Ruskin says: "Engraving then, is, in brief terms, the art of Scratch."

Leclair's style of writing for the violin contrasts strongly with that of his Italian predecessors. "Gracefulness and vivacity are more prominent than depth of feeling." His music is most difficult, and the performer has his work well cut out for him. He gains enormous sonority by the use of double stops - indeed, the first movement of "Le Tombeau" consists of them entirely.

The shape of the Sonata is conventionally baroque, four movements of alternating slow-fast. All the movements are in the same key, the third being a delicious gavotte.

The rendering of the figured basso-continuo is by Maxim Jacobsen.

PIETRO NARDINI (1722-1793)

Sonata in D major.

Nardini studied violin and composition with Tartini. His sonatas physically belong to the baroque, inasmuch as they were written for solo violin and basso-continuo (in this case unfigured), and formally to the classical.

Leopold Mozart said of his playing: "The beauty, purity and equality of his tone, and the tastefulness of his cantabile playing, cannot be surpassed; but he does not

execute great difficulties."

His music is rich in ornament and graceful melodic line.

The Sonata in D major appeared in 1760 as part of Opus 2. Originally it had three movements, Adagio, Allegro and Allegretto, all in the same key but the custom has arisen of adding another movement between the second and third, drawn from another sonata.

The form of each movement is in what could be termed "new binary" - which was fast becoming "sonata-form".

The working out of the bass part is by Ferdinand David.

MOZART (1756-1791)

Sonata No. 42 in A major, for Pianoforte and Violin.
(K. 526)

This Sonata was composed in Vienna during the August of 1787, shortly before Mozart's departure for Prague for the composition and performance of Don Giovanni. Indeed it was a crowded year for Mozart (as was every other year, for that matter), for in addition to the above works he composed three sonatas for organ and strings, three string quintets, piano solos and duets, three solo arias, nine songs, sundry instrumental works such as the familiar Eine Kleine Nachtmusik, the Musical Joke and dances, as well as some canons and a vocal trio.

In his later violin and piano sonatas the two instruments meet on equal terms, which is not the case in the earlier ones where the piano is the dominant partner.

Mozart was a violinist, as well as pianist, and the son of a violinist. In later life he did not appear as a violinist in public, confining his string playing to the viola in private string quartet meetings.

The A major sonata is in three movements, the slow middle one being perhaps the most interesting. Of the many interesting features, one is the frequent doubling of violin and bass parts, producing an aria all'unisono effect, another, the Rossinian vacillation between major and minor modes.

Godfrey Ridout

